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Courtship and Marriage

Some Counsels for
Women and Girls



By the
Rev. G. Longridge, B.A.
Of the Community of the Resurrection

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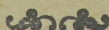
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Courtship and Marriage



I

THE DAYS OF COURTSHIP

(I) IMPORTANCE OF A HIGH IDEAL OF MARRIAGE

IT is an old saying that marriages are made in heaven, and surely there is a sense in which this is most true. Marriage is what GOD intends for most men and most women, and can we believe that, intending this, GOD leaves their union for life to mere accident? Is it not more reasonable, as well as more in accordance with the Fatherhood of GOD, to believe that He our FATHER has a real interest in, and does take a real part, if we will let Him, in bringing together those for whom marriage is His will?

And what an inspiring thought this ought to be to every maiden who looks forward to being one day a help "meet," or worthy, of the man who shall win her love! "If GOD

intends me to marry," so she may truly say, "then there is one as yet unknown to me, whom GOD is even now preparing to be my husband." What a new light this thought would pour upon her life! She would surely do her best to put away all selfishness or vanity or wilfulness, and would desire to consecrate all that she is and has in preparation for that life of wedded love which is one day to be hers. Purity and health, both of body and mind, knowledge of those things which she will need as wife and mother, and the continual deepening of her spiritual life, will be her constant care.

It is sometimes supposed that young women should not think about marriage until they are engaged. There are silly and so-called romantic ways of speaking and thinking of this most holy union in which, alas, many girls indulge, and which are thoroughly demoralizing and bad: and wise mothers will be careful to turn their daughters' thoughts on this subject into healthy and right directions. They will teach them what a holy and sacred thing marriage is, and that their preparation for marriage concerns the training of their body, their mind, and their soul: and they will not allow their children to grow out of their childhood without some clear teaching about their physical nature and the

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propagation of life. How many unhappy marriages are due to the fact that there was no real preparation, no real understanding of what marriage meant, no looking to GOD for guidance on the part of those married, no thought that their FATHER in heaven cared for or was interested in their marriage, or that their marriage was a union most holy and sacred because it was the result of a divine call and full of the deep mysteries of life and love.

(2) A GIRL'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS MEN

It is right and quite inevitable that boys and girls, young women and young men, should mix much together: but it is important for both her present and future happiness that a girl should remember wherein her true value in the eyes of all honourable and good men really lies.

A girl should do her best to dress quietly and well, according to her station in life: but to seek to attract men by the smartness or extravagance of her dress, still more by any, even the least, immodesty in dress, is to degrade her womanhood, and to make all good men turn away from her. For the same reason no girl who valued her self-respect would encourage flattery from men: and if a man presumed to attempt anything of the kind, she would at once stop him in such a way that he would not venture to attempt it again.

Any girl who looks forward to making a really happy marriage with a man worthy of her love will be particularly careful to make it practically impossible for any young man to attempt familiarities or in any way to

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